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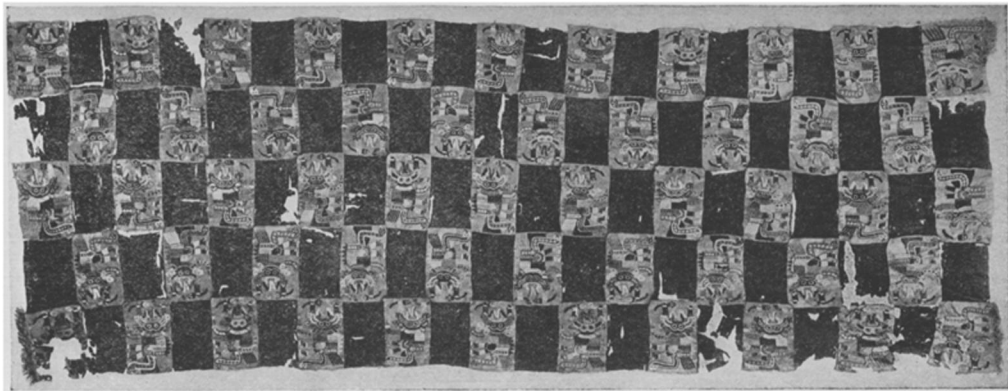
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*Peruvian Embroidered "Poncho"**Pre-Columbian*

Peruvian Textiles

THE Peruvian textiles lately given to the Museum by Dr. Denman Waldo Ross are quite different from any others in the collection, having been the product of a different locality and civilization. Only a few pieces have been brought to this country from the Nasca Valley, the district in which these were excavated. As in Egypt, we are indebted for the preservation of the textiles to the wonderful dryness of the climate as well as to the religion of the people, which caused them to bury clothing and other utensils with the dead. But unlike the Egyptians, the Peruvians left no inscriptions or hieroglyphics, and we therefore have no means of dating their work. It has been proved, however, to the satisfaction of Peruvian archæologists that the earliest civilizations of which the remains have been found were those at Truxillo and in the Nasca Valley. These seem to have been followed by that of Tiahuanaco on the Bolivian Plateau, and lastly by the Incas, at Cusco.

Dr. Ross' gift includes four pieces of tapestry and other weaves, a knitted border with pendent flower-shaped forms, and five pieces of embroidery, four capes or "ponchos," and one skirt. The

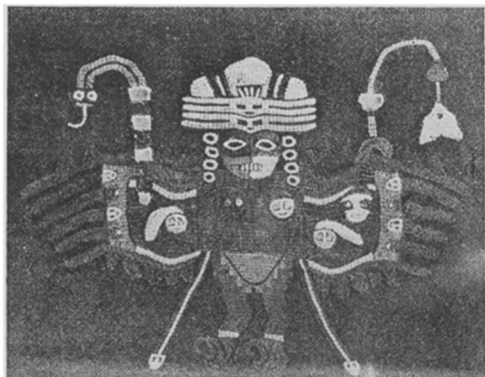
latter, like the ponchos, is a long straight piece of cloth, and was wound around and around the body like the Javanese Sarong, and tied on with two strips of cloth fastened to the upper corners.

The tapestry weaving and knitting are very beautiful, but of special interest are the wonderful embroidered garments which are on exhibition in the Coptic corridor. These garments are of basket weave, made with very fine and firmly twisted woolen thread. The embroidered decorations consist of human figures, some of them apparently personifying deities, and others either dressed as animals or represented as part animal and part man. They are most wonderful products of the imagination, carried out to the last detail with great thought and care. As the imagination had free play in the design, so did it also in the color scheme. Brilliancy, variety, and harmony of color are characteristic of these pieces. Dark blue-green, olive-green, and light Nile-green, dark blue, light gray-blue and turquoise-blue, dark red, deep rose, and salmon-pink, dark brown, golden brown and yellow, reddish-violet, and white are found combined with skill and daring. The drawing is free, not angular as in the later Peruvian textiles. The embroidery is done with parallel lines of what

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is commonly called crewel or Kensington stitch, each stitch starting from the middle and a little to one side of the previous one. The spindles and looms used were of the simplest, and a thorn with a hole in one end served for a needle.

The inhabitants of the Nasca Valley were evidently head-hunters, as in the designs of many of the textiles and vases the human and even the animal figures are decorated with trophy heads. These heads or faces are held in the hands or are on the fronts of the three-lobed caps, on the tunics and ponchos, the ends of sceptres or sticks and even on antennæ, the corners of the mouths, in the mouths, and at the ends of tails and extended tongues. In one piece the fins of the fish-like head-dress have faces on them. The lower illustration on page 40 shows a poncho decorated with figures of the God of the Trophy Heads. He stands with arms and poncho extended; his face, which resembles that of a monkey, appears to be partly



Detail of Peruvian Embroidery "Poncho"
Pre-Columbian

covered by a mask; falling from his three-lobed cap are two lines of circles. He wears a tunic with short sleeves, a breech cloth, and anklets. Trophy heads hang from his belt and decorate his simple garments. The poncho is dark green; the figures are embroidered with many colors.

The other poncho illustrated is dark reddish-violet, the oblong backgrounds of the figures being a brilliant golden-brown, almost orange. The fantastic figures, either part man and part beast or a man dressed as a beast, are worked with a great variety of bright colors and are drawn with the body, head and arms full face, the legs and the huge jaws of the mask or headdress in profile.

Another piece not illustrated has a deep orange-colored ground, and is covered with floating figures with huge fish-like headdresses and masks, from the mouths of which extend long tongues with heads on the ends of them. At the ends of tongues extended from these heads are still other heads.

The fourth poncho is dark green with blocks of deep rose-colored embroidery. On the latter

blocks is worked the figure of a man holding in one hand a staff with a monkey on it and in the other a leaf-like form. This figure seems more like a portrait than a mythical being, and gives us a vivid picture of the early inhabitants of Peru.

S. G. F.

Lecture Courses, 1916-1917

The Artistic Manifestations of Colonial and Early Republican Times (University Extension Course). Huger Elliott. Fifteen lectures on Saturdays, 10 A.M., beginning February 3, 1917. Conferences on Wednesdays at 4, obligatory for those desiring credit for a degree. Fee, \$2.50.

The Evolution of Painting. Huger Elliott. Fifteen lectures on Thursdays, 3 P.M., beginning February 1, 1917. Fee, \$5.

Lectures began during October on *The Elements of Architecture for Interior Decorators* and on *A Survey of the Industrial Arts*, by Huger Elliott; on *The Observation of Pictures*, by Miss Alicia M. Keyes; on *Artistic Anatomy*, by Philip L. Hale; and on the *History of Design*, by Henry Hunt Clark.

Simmons College Courses. Four courses under the auspices of Simmons College will be given at the Museum by Dr. F. Melbourne Greene, and are open to students who obtain the consent of the instructor. For further information address the Registrar of Simmons College, 300 The Fenway, Boston.

The list of Thursday conferences will be announced in the Bulletin for December.

Notes

THE MUSEUM regrets an unavoidable delay in the issue of the present Bulletin.

A MEMORIAL EXHIBITION of the work of the late Howard Gardiner Cushing was opened in the Renaissance Court November 9, to continue three weeks. The exhibition comprises portraits, decorative panels, landscapes and interiors.

AN EXHIBITION of European and American pewter was opened in the Forecourt Room on November 9, to continue until January 15.

THE LIBRARY of the Museum and the Textile Study, closed on Saturday afternoons during the summer, are now open on that day until the Museum closes.

MR. KOJIRO TOMITA, Keeper in the Department of Chinese and Japanese Art, was appointed Assistant Curator of the Department at the quarterly meeting of Trustees held October 19.

MISS MARIE LEHR, Assistant in the Print Department, has been asked by the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, Minn., to organize a Print Department in that institution, and has been granted by the Trustees of this Museum a year's leave of absence for the purpose.